



FIA Matters!

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Produced by FIA Office of Communications, Suite 1510, Grand Tower, Lansing

Submit stories by e-mail to FIA-Newsletter@michigan.gov

Today's big story

Gov. thanks Genesee County FIA staff

From Mark Stevens, Manager

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Governor Jennifer Granholm stopped in unannounced at the Genesee County FIA office May 13. The surprise visit was to personally recognize the staff of Genesee County FIA for their achievements in the areas of Food Assistance Program payment accuracy and launching of a "Safe Sleep" Campaign. Granholm was in Flint to give a speech and took the opportunity to give her personal message of thanks and appreciation to Genesee County staff.



Genesee County employees with Gov. Granholm (left to right): Ron Logan, Barbara Anders, Sandi Mose, Mark Stevens, Granholm, Sheryl Thompson and Nancy Reinke.

This fiscal year, Genesee County FIA has achieved an accuracy rate of 99.27 percent through February. Last fiscal year, Genesee County had an accuracy rate of 92.2 percent and in FY 1999, it was 77.6 percent. Genesee County management attributed this improvement to the hard work and dedication of staff, local initiatives and a requirement that payment accuracy be discussed at every staff meeting.

Genesee County initiated a "Safe Sleep" campaign to reduce the number of infant deaths due to unsafe sleeping arrangements. The campaign is a collaborative effort with many community partners to educate new parents on the importance of providing safe sleeping arrangements for infants. Recently, Genesee County had seen an increase of infant deaths. Since the campaign began in February there has been a dramatic decrease in reported deaths due to unsafe sleeping arrangements.

FIA 2004 golf challenge to be held in Cheboygan Sept. 17

From Denise Binger

Mackinac County FIA, St. Ignace

For information email: michiganfiagolf@yahoo.com

Greetings golf enthusiasts! The Cheboygan-Mackinac County FIA is honored to host the fourth annual Michigan FIA golf challenge this year and we are pleased to report that plans are well under way.

The **Cheboygan Golf and Country Club**, located at 1431 Old Mackinaw Road, has been chosen as the site for this year's event. The golf tournament is scheduled for **Friday, Sept. 17** and will commence with the traditional "shotgun" start at 9 A.M. Thursday, Sept. 16 has been set aside for practice rounds.

We are looking forward to a big turnout of participants for this year's tournament and are looking into the possibility of having two divisions this year – one division for the fun loving golfer and a second division for the more intense golfer. The winner of the "intense" division will be responsible for hosting next year's golf tournament.

Greens fees and motel accommodations will be very reasonable this year. Rates, along with entry forms and tournament rules, will be available shortly. Mark your calendars now for this fun filled event and keep looking for additional announcements and information.

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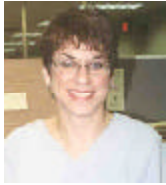
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Breast cancer 3-day walk

From Marcie Fincher
Oakland County FIA
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This August, I'll be participating in a very special event in metro Detroit called the Breast Cancer 3-Day. I'll be walking 60 miles over the course of three days with thousands of other women and men. The net proceeds will support breast cancer research, education, screening and treatment through the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and the National Philanthropic Trust.



Marcie Fincher I have chosen to dedicate the next few months training for this event in honor of loved ones who have been affected by this disease. I walk in memory of my husband's mother who passed away when my husband was a child as a result of breast cancer.

I've agreed to raise at least \$2,000 in donations. My personal goal is \$2,500. So I need your help. Would you please consider making a generous donation? In considering the amount to donate, please consider how long I am walking and how hard I will have to train prior to the event.

You may find out more about the Breast Cancer 3-Day by visiting the Web site at www.the3day.org You can sponsor my efforts on this site as well as learn more about the event and where it is taking place throughout the United States. Thank you in advance for your generosity! More importantly, thank you for your efforts to help make a difference. [Follow This Link](#) to visit my personal web page and help me support this effort.

Click here to send a story, question or photo to FIA Matters!

The Manistee FIA General "Fun"d Committee held a brat and hot dog cookout potluck to welcome summer and to bid farewell to children's services specialist **Tim Bottrell**. We couldn't get Tim a farewell corsage, so instead we presented him with the "**remembrance hat**" pictured here. Tim is going to be joining the children's services staff in Leelanau-Grand Traverse and we are going to miss him and wish him luck in the big city.

— from Shirley Sawdy



Weighty issue resolved

From Sarah Preston, Children's Protective Services
Isabella County FIA, Mt. Pleasant
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The Isabella County Children's Protective Services Unit participated in a "weight challenge" from March 8-May 3. Six CPS workers participated and collectively lost 58 pounds. Jim Watt was the big "winner" having lost 28 pounds in only 8 weeks and winning \$100! Jim Watt gave the money back to donate to the workers' favorite charities. The group brought in healthy snacks and worked out to facilitate the weight loss. The Foster Care Unit has now begun a similar challenge. **Photo:** The Isabella CPS Unit (left to right): **Jim Watt** (with prize), **Sarah Preston**, **Jack Sutton**, **Jeanne Barnhart** and **Lori Turner**. **John Jones** is not pictured.

My locks of love

By Darla Decker, Family Independence Specialist
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I recently donated 13 inches of my hair to **Locks of Love**, a 501c(3) organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss.

The prostheses provide help to restore self-esteem and confidence, enabling them to face the world and their peers. The minimum hair donation length is 10 inches and the hairpiece retails between \$3,500 to \$6,000. Between the ages of 6 and 18, a child can reapply every 18 months for a total of up to five hairpieces.

Locks of Love is located at 2925 10th Avenue North, Suite 102, Lake Worth, FL 33461 and their toll-free line is 1-888-896-1588. For more information go online to www.locksoflove.org



Earth Day in southwest Michigan

From Jo Kelly, Accounting Assistant
St. Joseph-Cass County FIA, Centreville
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St. Joseph County made the celebration of Earth Day into a family experience on April 24. FIA has run a family fun fair at the event since its inception. Dee Wolter heads a group of dedicated volunteers that work each year to make the day special for all the kids. Each year a craft project is provided.

This year children were encouraged to plant a sunflower seed. And as usual, the FIA duck pond was a hit. The weather was beautiful and other organizations did face painting, bubble blowing, necklace making, and other fun projects. Important information about area services was also provided to parents while their children were being entertained. A good time was had by all.



Dee Wolter at the St. Joseph FIA Earth Day booth.

Shiawassee County's protocol to protect vulnerable adults

From Pamela S. Holman
Shiawassee County FIA, Owosso
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Shiawassee County officially kicked off its Vulnerable Adult Abuse Protocol to the county on May 4 during an event held at Memorial Hospital in Owosso. It marked the culmination of several months of hard work by the local Coalition Against Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force dedicated to preventing abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults.

The kickoff event included an introduction and distribution of the protocol and guest speakers that addressed topics regarding adult abuse, neglect and exploitation and a luncheon. The afternoon featured a panel discussion including state and local agency representatives answering questions regarding how to identify and report abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults.

The protocol provides all segments of the community – non-profit and for-profit entities, law enforcement and the lay person – with a guide for identifying, reporting and preventing abuse of vulnerable adults. It is an educational tool that outlines the policies and procedures of each entity including suggestions on prevention and community resources.

Sanctioned by Shiawassee County's multi-purpose collaborative body, the Health and Human Services Council, the task force members set out to develop a county-wide response to address the problem of vulnerable adult abuse. In addition to developing the protocol, the task force seeks to:

- Raise awareness and provide education to the community in identifying factors that lead to abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Encourage the development of programs and services to prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Coordinate the reporting and investigation of suspected incidents of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Prosecute to the highest extent of the law those who violate Michigan law pertaining to vulnerable adults.

Genesee County volunteer banquet

From Eva D. Pyles
Genesee County FIA, Flint
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Genesee County FIA held its annual Volunteer Services banquet May 6 where 34 volunteers were recognized for their service. Local agencies that have supported our volunteer program attended and were recognized. Seven agencies received plaques for their continued outstanding community support. During the event a CD (with music) was shown that starred volunteers, staff members and some of the projects they worked on over the past year.

Our **volunteers and partners** include: **Evelyn Brown** (Baker College work study), **Jocelyn Vanda** (FIA interagency & community services), **Janet Dunham** (senior aid), **Betty Green** (volunteer), **Sha-Ron Fielder** (volunteer), **Kenya Massey** (Baker work study), **Harry Kralik** (volunteer), **Judy Kralik** (volunteer), **Mary Lou Spiekerman** (volunteer), **Matt Olender** (volunteer), **Bettie Hier** (volunteer) and **John Rustin** (volunteer).

Volunteer Drivers – **Leo McClain**, **Betty Ruth**, **Debra Ridley**, **Truban Harrison**, **Laslo Angyal**, **Vanda**, **Chambers**, **Marion Rodgers**, **Ruby Jenkins**, **Oswald Sams**, **Lester Thomas** and **Charles Mollseau**.

Local agency supporters – **UAW Local 598/GM Flint Assembly** (Carol McHale), **Second Avenue Resale Shop** (Beverly Capna), **Colony Cleaners** (Spencer Dallaire), **Baker College** (Jennifer Merc), **Genesee County Community Action Resource Department** (Steve Walker), **Delta Kappa Gamma MU Chapter** (Jeanette Kerr) and **Resource Center** (Sybyl Atwood).

A big thank you goes out to all who help make our Volunteer Program as great as it is.

Date: Today
To: Readers
Subj: [Lisa Putman](#)

Lisa Putman's name was spelled incorrectly in the May 24 e-mail edition. FIA Matters! apologizes for any inconvenience this caused.

Date: April 28
To: Alan Kimichik, Director
FIA Office of Inspector General, Lansing
Subj: Staff

I would like to commend two agents working in Wayne County. [Cozme Delapaz](#) and [Allen Polka](#), two of your employees, have always acted and responded to requests for assistance, in regards to Wayne County criminal cases, in a most courteous and professional way. It's a pleasure to work with both of these fine gentlemen. Please let them know how much they are appreciated by our office.

[Dorothy Knox](#), Chief of Investigations
Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, Detroit

■ Cozme Delapaz is a manager and Allen Polka is an agent with FIA Office of Inspector General. The OIG is responsible for investigating instances of alleged welfare fraud in all programs administered by the FIA as well as reviewing administrative policies and procedures and recommending ways of improving accountability, fraud deterrence and detection.

Date: April 12
To: Jerome Rutland, Director
Wayne County FIA, Detroit
Subj: Western Wayne case

The Office of Children's Ombudsman (OCO) would like to take this opportunity to recognize Western- Wayne County CPS worker, [Kenneth Devine](#), for his commendable work on behalf of (a case).

The OCO recently investigated a complaint relating to Wayne County FIA's handling of multiple CPS complaints. We concluded our investigation and submitted a letter to our complainant affirming the actions of Wayne County FIA in investigating five CPS complaints involving this family beginning in June 2002. Devine was the assigned CPS worker for a complaint dated June 9, 2002. After review of the case materials, we felt compelled to issue a separate letter acknowledging the exemplary work completed by Mr. Devine under the supervision of [Ruth Barrese](#).

The OCO was impressed with the thorough manner in which Devine gathered and evaluated information. Devine's investigative and documentation skills are exceptional. His pre-FIA work experience proved to be a valuable help in this difficult case related to child custody. Overall, the documentation was methodical and easily led the reader to a conclusion that expertly extricated the presenting issues and supported his Category IV conclusion. It has been a pleasure to observe the excellent work of Mr. Devine. There is no doubt that he is an asset to Wayne County FIA.

[Lynne Martinez](#)
Children's Ombudsman, Lansing

■ The Office of Children's Ombudsman is an independent government agency established by Public Act 204 of 1994. The act gives the Ombudsman authority to investigate complaints about children in Michigan's child welfare system. The original letter included case identifying information that was removed to protect case confidentiality.

Your letters,
intercepted
and otherwise

Submitting customer letters for publication

Customer letters praising employees are very popular with other employees. To submit a customer letter for publication:

1. Ensure your supervisor knows about this and approves.
2. Have the customer sign **Consent for Publication** form, which is downloadable from the MS Word template as form **0199.dot**
3. Send the letter and a copy of the signed consent form to me by e-mail to FIA-Newsletter@michigan.gov or by fax (517-373-8471).
4. Include the letter writer's hometown and the job classification(s) of the employee(s) cited in the letter.

FIA Matters! is a product of Michigan's Family Independence Agency
Marianne Udow, Director Karen Smith, Director, Office of Communications
Larry VanDeSande, editor Submit stories by e-mail to: FIA-Newsletter@michigan.gov